

REMARKS

This Reply is in response to the Office Action mailed on March 12, 2004 in which Claims 1-20 were rejected. With this Reply, Claim 18 is amended, Claims 14 and 19 are cancelled and Claims 21-39 are added. Claims 1-13 and 15-18 and 20-39 are presented for reconsideration and allowance.

I. Examiner Interview Summary.

On April 26, 2004, a telephone interview was held between Examiners Ashanti Ghee and Kimberly Williams and Applicants' attorney, Todd Rathe. The rejection of Claims 1 and 11 which are based at least in part upon Hokamura, U.S. Patent No. 5,328,166, were discussed. It was agreed upon that Hokamura fails to disclose a removable media holder distinct from the media tray. It was further agreed upon that the rejection of each of Claims 1-17, which are all based in part upon Hokamura, would be withdrawn. Examiners Ghee and Williams indicated that a further search would be conducted.

Applicants wish to thank Examiners Ghee and Williams for the opportunity to discuss the rejections based upon Hokamura.

II. Objection to the Drawings.

Paragraph 1 of the Office Action objected to the drawings, noting that the drawings do not include "lower surface 126" noted on page 4, line 30. In response, Figure 3 is amended as indicated in red on the attached sheet to add reference numeral 126. A separate letter to the official draftsman requesting such changes is also enclosed with this Reply. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objections to the drawings be withdrawn in light of the drawing amendments.

III. Rejection of Claim 14 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph.

Paragraph 3 of the Office Action rejected Claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. In response, Claim 14 is cancelled.

IV. Rejection of Claims 1-2, 4-9 and 11-17 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) Based Upon Hokamura.

Paragraph 5 of the Office Action rejected Claims 1-2, 4-9 and 11-17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hokamura, U.S. Patent No. 5,328,166. As noted above, during the Examiner interview held on April 26, 2004, it was agreed upon that Hokamura fails to disclose a removable media holder distinct from a media tray. It was further agreed upon that the rejection of Claims 1-2, 4-9 and 11-17 based upon Hokamura would be withdrawn.

V. Rejection of Claim 3 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Based Upon Hokamura and Mayer.

Paragraph 7 of the Office Action rejected Claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hokamura in view of Mayer et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,746,528. As noted above, during an Examiner interview held on April 26, 2004, it was agreed upon that Hokamura fails to disclose a removable media holder distinct from a media tray. Mayer also fails to disclose a removable media holder distinct from a media tray. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of Claim 3 based upon Hokamura in view of Mayer be withdrawn.

VI. Rejection of Claim 10 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Based Upon Hokamura and Trask.

Paragraph 8 of the Office Action rejected Claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hokamura in view of Trask et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,116,034. As noted above, during an Examiner interview held on April 26, 2004, it was agreed upon that Hokamura fails to disclose a removable media holder

distinct from a media tray. Trask also fails to disclose a removable media holder distinct from a media tray. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of Claim 10 be withdrawn.

VII. Rejection of Claims 18 and 20 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as Being Unpatentable Over Watanabe and Mayer.

Paragraph 9 of the Office Action rejected Claims 18 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Watanabe, U.S. Patent No. 5,287,164 in view of Mayer et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,746,528. Claim 18, as amended, incorporates the limitations of Claim 19 and further recites that the media tray has an edge registration surface and that the method includes the step of abutting the small media against the registration surface.

As acknowledged in paragraph 10 of the Office Action, neither Watanabe nor Mayer disclose a media tray having an edge registration surface or the step of positioning the small media abutting the registration surface. In rejecting former Claim 19, the Office Action additionally relied upon Hokamura and asserted that Hokamura discloses "the step of positioning (slidable) a media holder (containing portion 41) includes positioning (regulating) the small media (accommodated recording papers) abutting the registration surface (regulating side edges reads on abutting the registration surface; col. 4, lines 14-66)." However, in contrast to the assertions in the Office Action, Hokamura does not disclose positioning a media holder in a tray. As noted above, during the Examiner interview held on April 26, 2004, it was agreed upon that Hokamura fails to disclose a media holder distinct from a media tray. In contrast, Hokamura merely discloses a media tray. Accordingly, Hokamura cannot satisfy the Examiner-acknowledged deficiency of Watanabe and Mayer which also failed to disclose positioning a media holder holding small media in abutment with a registration surface of a tray. Thus, Claim 18, as amended, overcomes the rejection based upon Watanabe and Mayer. Claim 18 is also patentably distinct over Watanabe and Mayer in view of Hokamura. Claim 20 depends from Claim 18 and overcomes the rejection for the same reasons.

VIII. Added Claims.

With this Reply, Claims 21-39 are added. Claims 21-31 depend from Claim 1 and are believed to be patentably distinct over the prior art of record for the same reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 1. In addition, added Claims 21-31 recite additional features which are patentably distinct over the prior art of record.

Claim 32 depends from Claim 11 and is believed to be patentably distinct over the prior art of record for the same reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 11. Claim 32 recites additional features which are patentably distinct over the prior art of record.

Added Claim 33 recites a media handling system including a media registration surface or a media edge registration surface and a holder movable along the media edge registration surface. The holder includes a floor configured to extend below the media held by the holder and a wall configured to face the edge registration surface while engaging edges of media and moving towards and away from the media edge registration surface. The prior art of record fails to disclose a holder which is movable along a media edge registration surface which includes a floor configured to extend below the media held by the holder and a wall facing the media edge registration surface and movable towards and away from the edge registration surface. Accordingly, Claim 33 is presented for consideration and allowance. Claims 34-39 depend from Claim 33 and recite additional features which are further patentably distinguishable over the prior art of record.

IX. Conclusion.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-13, 15-18 and 20-39 are now pending in this application.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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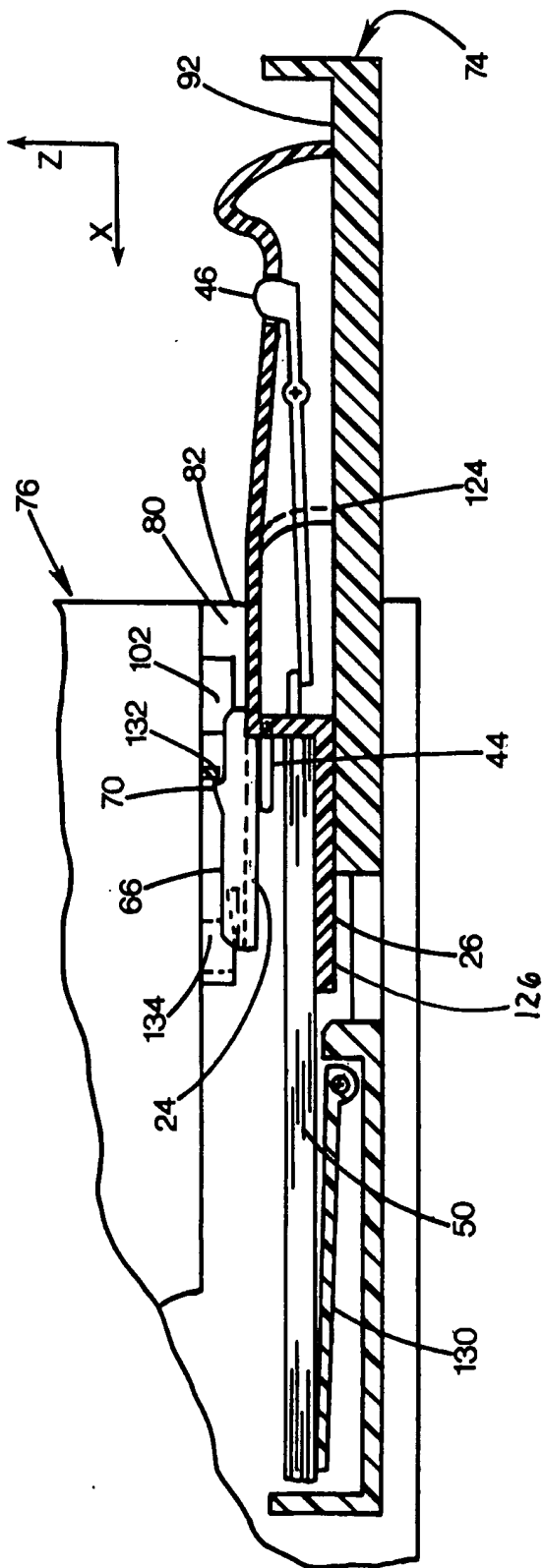


FIG. 3